

# ADA Checklist for Readily Achievable Barrier Removal

## What is Readily Achievable Barrier Removal?

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires public accommodations (businesses and non-profit organizations) to provide goods and services to people with disabilities on an equal basis with the rest of the public.

Businesses and non-profit organizations that serve the public are to remove architectural barriers when it is “readily achievable” to do so; in other words, when barrier removal is “easily accomplishable and able to be carried out without much difficulty or expense.”

The decision of what is readily achievable is made considering the size, type, and overall finances of the public accommodation and the nature and cost of the access improvements needed. Barrier removal that is difficult now may be readily achievable in the future as finances change.

This checklist is intended to assist public accommodations as the first step in a planning process for readily achievable barrier removal.

Public accommodations’ ADA obligations for barrier removal can be found in the Department of Justice’s ADA Title III regulations 28 CFR Part 36.304.

## Priorities for Barrier Removal

The ADA Title III regulations recommend four priorities for barrier removal. The purpose of these priorities is to facilitate business planning. The priorities are not mandatory.

## How to Use this Checklist

**Get Organized** - One person can conduct a survey, but it’s easier with two people. One person can take measurements and the other person can fill out the checklist and take photos.

**Obtain Floor Plans** - A floor plan or sketch helps the surveyors get oriented and know how many elements, such as drinking fountains and entrances, there are and where they are. If plans are not available, sketch the layout of interior and exterior spaces.

**Make Copies of the Checklist** - Determine how many copies of each section of the checklist you need. For example, most facilities have more than one toilet room.

### Gather Tools -

- Checklist
- Clipboard makes it easier to write on the checklist
- Tape measure
- Electronic or carpenter’s level - 24 inches
- Door pressure gauge or fish scale for measuring door-opening force
- Digital camera
- Bag to hold these items

Public accommodations may determine the most effective mix of barrier removal measures to undertake in their facilities.

Priority 1 - Accessible approach and entrance

Priority 2 - Access to goods and services

Priority 3 - Access to public toilet rooms

Priority 4 - Access to other items such as water fountains and public telephones

## 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design

This checklist is based on the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design (2010 Standards). The specifications are in this checklist to help determine what may be readily achievable barrier removal for existing facilities. This checklist does not include all sections of the 2010 Standards. For example there are no questions about patient rooms in hospitals or guest rooms in hotels. Consult the 2010 Standards for situations not covered in the checklist. Full compliance with the 2010 Standards is required only for new construction and alterations. The web address for the 2010 Standards is in the Resources section.

## Safe Harbor – Construction Prior to March 15, 2012

Elements in facilities built or altered before March 15, 2012 that comply with the 1991 ADA Standards for Accessible Design (1991 Standards) are not required to be modified to specifications in the 2010 Standards. For example, the 1991 Standards allow 54 inches maximum for a side reach range to a control such as the operating part of a paper towel dispenser. The 2010 Standards lower that side reach range to 48 inches maximum. If a paper towel dispenser was installed prior to March 15, 2012 with the

## Conduct the Survey

**Start Outside** - Start from site arrival points such as drop-off areas and public sidewalks and determine if there is an accessible route to an accessible entrance. If there is a parking lot or garage check for the correct number of accessible parking spaces, including van-accessible spaces. Is there an accessible route from the accessible parking spaces to an accessible entrance? Next survey the entrances. If there is an accessible entrance, determine if there are signs at inaccessible entrances directing people to the accessible entrance. Go inside and continue through the facility and the checklist.

**Keep Good Notes** - Write on the front of each checklist where you are surveying. You may end up with six toilet room checklists. When you get back to your office you'll want to know which one is the checklist for the first floor women's room. If there isn't an accessible entrance you'll want to indicate how many steps there are and how much space is available to install a ramp or lift. This is a good time to take photographs.

**Take Good Measurements** - When in doubt write it down. It's better to have too much information than not enough. Even if something is in compliance it's helpful to have exact measurements.

highest operating part at 54 inches, the paper towel dispenser does not need to be lowered to 48 inches. Since the dispenser complies with the 1991 Standards, that Standard provides a “safe harbor.”

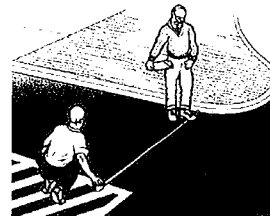
## New Elements in the 2010 ADA Standards

The 2010 Standards contain elements that are not in the 1991 Standards. These elements include recreation facilities such as swimming pools, team or player seating, accessible routes in court sports facilities, saunas and steam rooms, fishing piers, play areas, exercise machines, golf facilities, miniature golf facilities, amusement rides, shooting facilities with firing positions, and recreational boating facilities. Because these elements were not included in the 1991 Standards, they are not subject to the safe harbor exemption. Public accommodations must remove architectural barriers to these items when it is readily achievable to do so. For example, a hotel must determine whether it is readily achievable to make its swimming pool accessible by installing a lift, a sloped entry or both as specified in the 2010 Standards.

## What this Checklist is Not

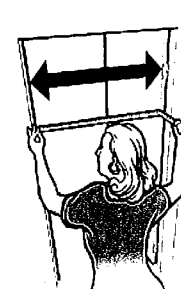
The ADA Title III regulations require more than barrier removal. The regulations include requirements for nondiscriminatory policies and practices and for the provision of auxiliary aids and services, such as sign language interpreters for people who are deaf and material in Braille for people who are blind. This checklist does not cover those requirements.

Since this checklist does not include all of the 2010 Standards it is not intended to determine compliance for new construction or facilities being altered.



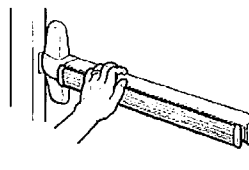
### Parking Spaces

Measure from the inside edge of the painted line to the inside of the opposite painted line or edge of space.



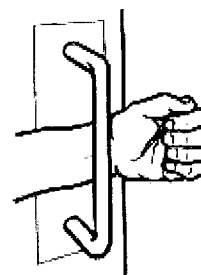
### Door Clear Width

Open the door 90 degrees, measure from the face of the door to the edge of the door stop.



### Door Opening Force

If you're using a door pressure gauge place it where you would push open the door.



If you're using a fish scale place it where you would pull open the door.

## What are Public Accommodations?

Under the ADA public accommodations are private entities that own, lease, lease to or operate a place of public accommodation. This means that both a landlord who leases space in a building to a tenant and the tenant who operates a place of public accommodation have responsibilities to remove barriers.

A place of public accommodation is a facility whose operations affect commerce and fall within at least one of the following 12 categories:

- 1) Places of lodging (e.g., inns, hotels, motels, except for owner-occupied establishments renting fewer than six rooms)
- 2) Establishments serving food or drink (e.g., restaurants and bars)
- 3) Places of exhibition or entertainment (e.g., motion picture houses, theaters, concert halls, stadiums)
- 4) Places of public gathering (e.g., auditoriums, convention centers, lecture halls)
- 5) Sales or rental establishments (e.g., bakeries, grocery stores, hardware stores, shopping centers)
- 6) Service establishments (e.g., laundromats, dry-cleaners, banks, barber shops, beauty shops, travel services, shoe repair services, funeral parlors, gas stations, offices of accountants or lawyers, pharmacies, insurance offices, professional offices of health care providers, hospitals)
- 7) Public transportation terminals, depots, or stations (not including facilities relating to air transportation)



### Accessible Slopes

You can measure slope with a 24 inch level and a tape measure. Put the level on the surface in the direction you are

measuring. Put one end at the high point of the surface and raise the other end so that the bubble is in the middle of the level's gauge. The level is now level. Measure the distance between the end of the level at its bottom point and the surface.

For a ramp the maximum running slope allowed is 1:12. That means for every inch of height change there should be at least 12 inches of ramp run. If the distance between the bottom of the level and the ramp surface is 2 inches or less, then the slope is 1:12 or less ( $2:24 = 1:12$  and  $1.5:24 = 1:16$  which is a more gradual slope than 1:12). If the distance is greater than 2 inches, the ramp is too steep. For example, if the distance is 3 inches, then the slope is 1:8 ( $3:24 = 1:8$  which is a steeper slope than 1:12).

For the parts of an accessible route that aren't a ramp, the maximum running slope allowed is 1:20. That means for every inch of height change there must be at least 20 inches of route run. The distance from the bottom edge of the level to the surface should be no more than 1.2 inches ( $1.2:24 = 1:20$ ).

- 8) Places of public display or collection (e.g. , museums, libraries, galleries)
- 9) Places of recreation (e.g. , parks, zoos, amusement parks)
- 10) Places of education (e.g. , nursery schools, elementary, secondary, undergraduate, or postgraduate private schools)
- 11) Social service center establishments (e.g. , day care centers, senior citizen centers, homeless shelters, food banks, adoption agencies)
- 12) Places of exercise or recreation (e.g. , gymnasiums, health spas, bowling alleys, golf courses).

## Resources

### U.S. Department of Justice ADA Information

800-514-0301 voice

800-514-0383 TTY

[www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov)

### ADA National Network

800-949-4232 voice/TTY connects to your regional ADA Center

[www.adata.org](http://www.adata.org)

### U.S. Access Board

800- 872-2253 voice

800-993-2822 TTY

[www.access-board.gov](http://www.access-board.gov)

For the cross slope of an accessible route the maximum slope allowed is 1:48. The distance from the bottom edge of the level to the surface should be no more than ½ inch (.5:24 = 1:48). The cross slope of an accessible route is the slope that is perpendicular to the direction of pedestrian travel.

Slopes may also be measured using a digital level. Be sure to read the instructions. Measure with the percent calculation rather than the degrees calculation. For a ramp the maximum running slope allowed is 8.33% (8.33% is a 1:12 slope). For an accessible route without a ramp the maximum running slope allowed is 5% (1:20). For the cross slope of an accessible route the maximum slope allowed is 2.083% (1:48).

**Check that You Got Everything** - Before you leave the site review all the checklists. Make sure you know which checklist goes with which entrance and which toilet room and that you've got all the information you need. It is better to do it now than to have to go back.

## After the Survey

**List Barriers and Solutions** - Consider the solutions listed beside each question on the checklist and add your own ideas. Consult with building contractors and equipment suppliers to estimate the costs for making modifications.

### **ADA Title III Regulations 28 CFR Part 36**

[www.ada.gov/regs2010/titleIII\\_2010/titleIII\\_2010\\_regulations.htm](http://www.ada.gov/regs2010/titleIII_2010/titleIII_2010_regulations.htm)

### **2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design**

[www.ada.gov/2010ADASTandards\\_index.htm](http://www.ada.gov/2010ADASTandards_index.htm)

### **1991 ADA Standards for Accessible Design**

[www.ada.gov/stdspdf.htm](http://www.ada.gov/stdspdf.htm)

### **Tax Deductions and Credits for Barrier Removal**

[www.ada.gov/taxincent.htm](http://www.ada.gov/taxincent.htm)

## **Acknowledgements**

Many of the illustrations are from the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Access Board or are based on illustrations produced by the U.S. Access Board and the U.S. Department of Justice.

## **Develop an Implementation Plan -**

Although an implementation plan is not required, the Department of Justice recommends such a plan, specifying what barriers will be removed and when solutions will occur: *"...Such a plan...could serve as evidence of a good faith effort to comply..."* Prioritize items, make a timeline and develop a budget. Where the removal of barriers is not readily achievable, consider whether there are alternative methods for providing access that are readily achievable such as curbside takeout service at a restaurant with an accessible intercom system outside.

## **Make Changes -**

Use the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design. Note: Until March 15, 2012 the 1991 ADA Standards for Accessible Design may be used for readily achievable barrier removal. Check whether local and state building codes require greater accessibility when alterations are undertaken.

**Follow Up** - Review the implementation plan each year to evaluate whether more access improvements have become readily achievable.